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Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL IS

SUBJECT: ARAB TEACHERS SEMINARY IN HAIFA

1. EDWARD GREENE OF GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT CALLED AT DEPARTMENT (NEA/IAI) MARCH 28. HE ADVISED HE AND HIS WIFE WILL VISIT ISRAEL IN APRIL-MAY, REVIEWED HIS EIGHT YEARS' ACTIVITIES IN HELPING FINANCE 112 SCHOLARSHIPS AT HAIFA SEMINARY, AND WANTED TO EXPLORE WAYS IN WHICH USG MIGHT HELP PROMOTE CONVERSION OF SEMINARY INTO FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING. HE SAID HE HAD INFORMED USIEF (KRAUSKOPF) OF HIS TRAVEL PLANS.

2. MR. GREENE RECALLED THAT FORMER AMBASSADOR KEATING HAD TAKEN INTEREST IN HIS SCHOLARSHIP EFFORTS AND IN 1974 OR 1975 HAD HAD EMBASSY CULTURAL OFFICER ATTEND ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP-AWARDS CEREMONY AT SEMINARY AND CONVEY AMBASSADOR'S GREETINGS. THIS YEAR SEMINARY WAS PRESSING GREENE TO ATTEND AWARDS CEREMONY AND RECEIVE SPECIAL HONORS.
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GREENE HAD NO INTEREST WHATEVER IN DOING SO BUT WONDERED IF EMBASSY ONCE AGAIN COULD BE INVOLVED. POSSIBLE RESULTANT PUBLICITY MIGHT HELP NUDGE ISRAELI EDUCATION AUTHORITIES TO RECONSIDER THEIR NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD UPGRADING SEMINARY FROM THREE- TO FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTION, THEREBY ENABLING GRADUATES TO QUALIFY AS SECONDARY RATHER THAN

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ONLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLTEACHERS. ACCORDING TO GREENE, ONLY BY ATTENDING ISRAELI UNIVERSITY IN HEBREW LANGUAGE CAN ISRAELI ARAB TODAY QUALIFY AS SECONDARY SCHOOLTEACHER--EVEN AT ARAB SCHOOL.

3. DEPTOFF SAID HE SHARED GREENE'S CONCERN ABOUT LOW PRIORITY ACCORDED BY ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATIONAL POSSIBILITIES IN ARABIC FOR ITS CITIZENS AND THOUGHT GREENE HAD VALID POINT IN HIS VISION OF ROLE THAT ISRAELI ARABS MIGHT SOME DAY PLAY AS BRIDGE FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN JEWISH STATE AND ITS ARAB NEIGHBORS. NEVERTHELESS, DECISIONS ON WHAT SHOULD BE DONE TO FURTHER CULTURAL LIFE OF ISRAELI ARABS AND IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL'S ARAB AND JEWISH COMMUNITIES WERE STRICTLY INTERNAL MATTER FOR ISRAEL AND PROBABLY ONE OVER WHICH ISRAELI AUTHORITIES WERE QUITE SENSITIVE. PRIVATE AMERICAN INITIATIVES LIKE GREENE'S WERE UNDOUBTEDLY BENEFICIAL. ANY U.S. OFFICIAL INVOLVEMENT IN THEM, HOWEVER, WOULD RUN RISK OF GETTING ISRAELIS' BACKS UP.

4. WE HOPE EMBASSY WILL RECEIVE GREENE AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL AND DISCUSS HIS PROJECT WITH HIM. EMBASSY WILL FIND HIM EMINENTLY REASONABLE AND RESPONSIVE TO EMBASSY SUGGESTIONS. COOPER

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